

## Washington's Public Schools

### School Districts

Washington has 296 school districts. The three largest, with over 30,000 students, are Seattle, Tacoma and Spokane. The three smallest, with less than 20 students, are Shaw in San Juan County; Roosevelt in Klickitat County and Benge in Adams County. (OSPI)

### Full-Time Enrollment

For the 1995-1996 school year, total K-12 enrollment in Washington's public schools was 904,174. For the last decade of the 20th Century, projected K-12 enrollment growth is 23.4% compared to a projected 18.5 percent state population growth for this same period. (Joint Legislative Fiscal Committees)

### Compulsory Attendance

Washington requires children age 8 to 18 to attend school. A public school year is 180 days. Early withdrawal is possible if a student, who is at least age 16, is regularly employed and the parent agrees or the student is emancipated, and if he or she has met graduation requirements or has a certificate of education competency. (RCW 28A.225.010)

- Nine states have compulsory attendance laws beginning at age 5, nineteen beginning at age 6, and twenty plus the District of Columbia at age 7. (Education Commission of the States (ECS))

### Teacher-Student Ratios

State funding provides for one certificated staff per 18.42 students in K-3 and 21.7 students in grades four through 12. The administrator to student ratio is one to 250 and the classified staff/student ratio is one to 60. (Joint Legislative Fiscal Committees)

## State Spending

K-12 spending accounts for 47.2 percent of the 1995-97 General Fund-State budget for a total of \$8,316,882,000. Eighty-three percent of this appropriation goes for salaries (63.7) and benefits (19.7). (Joint Legislative Fiscal Committees)

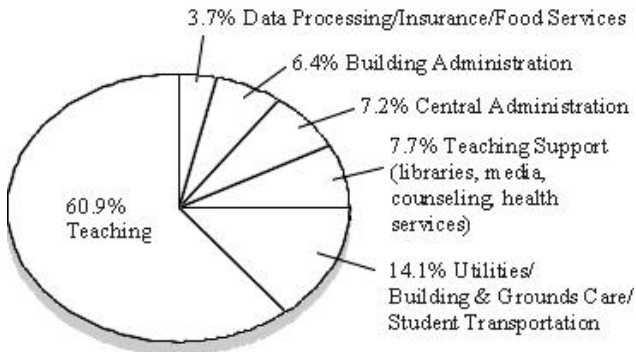
General Fund-State		
<i>Biennium</i>	<i>Dollars in Millions</i>	<i>Percent General Fund-State</i>
1983-85	\$3,105	46.0
1985-87	\$4,222	46.0
1987-89	\$4,819	46.8
1989-91	\$6,032	46.4
1991-93	\$7,059	46.4
1993-95	\$7,757	48.0
1995-97	\$8,317	47.2

(Source: Final Legislative Reports)

- The current annual K-12 allocation in state dollars per student is \$4,385. (Senate Ways & Means Committee) Including all dollars (federal, state and local), the per student allocation is \$5,750. (Senate Ways & Means Committee)
- Washington ranks 20th among the 50 states in per pupil spending. (American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC))
- The average teacher's salary is \$38,026. (Joint Legislative Fiscal Committees)
- Washington ranks 20th among the 50 states in teachers' salaries. (ALEC)
- The average administrator's salary is \$44,437. (Joint Legislative Fiscal Committees)
- The average classified employee's salary is \$23,738. (Joint Legislative Fiscal Committees)

# FAST FACTS & TALKING POINTS

## Functions K-12 Dollars Support



*(Joint Legislative Fiscal Committees)*

*For more information about Washington's public schools, contact Kathleen Lawrence, Policy Analyst, Senate Republican Caucus, P.O. Box 40482, Olympia WA 98504-0482, 360-786-7507.*

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